(c) The Government of India extends financial assistance for a number of Development and Welfare Schemes to handloom weavers through State Governments. These schemes include Project Package, Development of Exportable Products and their Marketing, Workshed-cum-Housing, Thrift Fund, Health Package, Group Insurance, New Insurance, Market Development Assistance etc.

New Quota Policy for Textiles

2295. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many exporters are showing grievance against the new policy announced recently;

(b) if so, the steps taken to rectify the snags in the policy;

(c) what advantages it would give to textile exports from the country; and

(d) whether Government are taking steps to amend the policy and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) The Government had setup a Task Force to make recommendations on the long term quota (export entitlement) distribution policies for a period of five years with effect from 1.1.2000 to 31.12.2004. The Task Force invited responses from Export Promotion Councils (EPCs), leading trade associations and federations on various aspects of the quota policies. The Task Force also conducted two Open House Sessions to interact with various exporters and the associations concerned at New Delhi and Mumbai. Thus it may be seen that the Task Force considered the inputs from a wide range of sources before submitting the report. This report was taken into account while framing the New Quota Policy.

Suggestions received from various associations of textile/garment exporters from time to time are duly considered and appropriate changes are made, whenever deemed necessary, to facilitate the smooth operation of the Quota System.

The Policy is expected to

(i) result in better utilisation of quotas and thus better realisation of foreign exchange;

(ii) encourage new investment in garments sector leading to greater employment generation;

(iii) encourage exports of high value garments and quality products; and

(iv) facilitate proper production planning and execution of export orders.

Sericulture Development Project in Assam

2296. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 4733, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 29th July, 1998 and state:

(a) the status of the Assam Sericulture Development Project to be implemented through OECF loan assistance;

(b) the time taken by Government to examine and forward the recasted proposal of Assam Government;

(c) whether OECF has been approached by Government of India to obtain the land;